

Ford Suburban 8 Choice; But Beware Of Plymouth

By FRED DeLANO

Edsel Ford High School in Dearborn is considered the team to beat if any of its Suburban Eight rivals have notions of edging the pupils of Coach Jon Davis out of the league's 1972 football championship -- and several do.

Allen Park captured the 1971 crown with a 6-0-1 league mark included in rolling to the school's finest record of all time, 8-0-1 overall, but guess who that one tie was with and what it portends for the upcoming campaign.

THE ANSWER, of course, is the 6-6 tie between Edsel Ford and Allen Park was the only blemish on the latter's record last season; and with 19 returning lettermen Ford appears to have a real shot at the championship.

Heading the returning cast is Ford's all-league quarterback, Mike Booth, a 5-10, 165-pound crackerjack who teamed with his mates to win their last four games in a row last fall and will be attempting to pick up where they left off in this year's opener against East Detroit.

Allen Park is caught in a situation which sees Coach Al Vadasy trying to rebuild with only six returning lettermen, the '71 gradu-

ates including the league's best runner, all-stater Don Trionfi.

NUMERICALLY, in terms of lettermen on hand, Plymouth rates as the top threat to Edsel Ford, but Redford Union also is considered one of the prime title candidates where Coach Bob Atkins has four returning defensive first-stringers and five from his No. 1 offensive lineup of a year ago.

"Anyone can win this year," says Atkins. "No one's going to go undefeated because every team will take turns at knocking each other off. There won't be a week to catch your breath."

Atkins knows whereof he speaks, having only to think back to last season when the Panthers put together an opening string of six straight victories and then were dumped by Allen Park, 15-8.

Plymouth goes into the season with Coach Tom Moshimer still trying to determine whether Jim Szilagyi or Steve Robb, both veterans, is his No. 1 quarterback. In either case, the Rocks are blessed with one of the finest ends in Michigan in senior Ron Egloff, making it evident that Plymouth will count heavily upon its aerial game to improve upon last year's overall 4-5 record.

Harrison Faces Battle In Hot Western 6 Race

Farmington Harrison will be out to defend its first Western Six football championship in a season that should feature a three-way tangle to the finish.

The threesome of Churchill, Harrison and Waterford Mott is fast becoming the power of the Western Six with Walled Lake Western and Northville battling for the cellar berth.

Harrison surprised everyone last year with a 4-0 mark on the legs of Dave Manos who has graduated and Coach John Herrington is looking for a balanced effort.

Mott finished second last season at 3-1 with Churchill even at 2-2. Mott has almost everyone back and could become the team to beat.

THE WESTERN SIX has quickly gained the reputation of being a defensive league with Churchill probably tops in that category.

"Our strength will be in our defense and we will go from there," said Churchill Coach Ken Kaestner.

Churchill has 14 returning lettermen with Bob Blaies and Brian Kelly key figures in the quarterback slot.

Churchill opens with Thurston on Sept. 15 and meets John Glenn

and Waterford before beginning Western Six action against Harrison on Oct. 7.

HARRISON is out to defend its crown behind the passing arm of second year starter Chris Pagnucco.

"We are building around Pagnucco and his passing game," said Herrington.

Harrison sports 16 returning lettermen including 10 starters and Herrington has a tough assignment ahead of him to prove to opponents that Harrison wasn't all Manos.

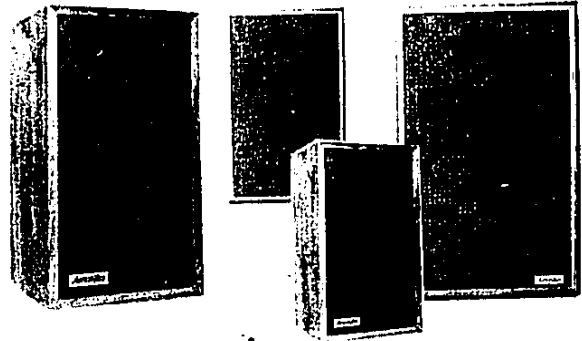
The Hawks finished 1-4 in non-league competition last season to finish at the .500 mark overall.

"I think we have a shot to repeat as league champs," said Herrington. "Waterford Mott and Churchill have to be the favorites but I can picture a three-way scramble."

Harrison has been forced to go to the passing game. Its offensive line averages only 164 pounds and Herrington doesn't see any bright spot in the running game.

"I don't see us developing much of anything in a running game . . . passing will be the key to our season's success," added Herrington.

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